1: Federal W-5 (no date) 1986
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
Georgia

761 Wen a pusson dies some one have fix im sho. Bout a yeah
754 ago an ole woman went fuh a walk right down this road yuh. She went up on a hill cross frum yuh weah she live an the nex mawnin she wuz foun dead theah. Mos folks said she wuz cunjuhed that night, though theah wuz some wut did say she have haht trouble. Jis a week aw so ago the brothuh of a neighbuh die right sudden an folks said he wuz cunjuhed too." • [15]

764 In regard to death we found a rigid observance of customs that were prevalent also in the other communities. For example, one Negro's body had been shipped back from New York City in order that it might be buried in Sandfly. Oth-
764 erwise, we were told, the spirit of the deceased would have
775 found no rest, but instead would have roamed the countryside.[1] Here, too, was observed the practice of placing broken bits of pottery and possessions last used by the dead person on the grave for the purpose of supplying the needs of the spirit.[47]

• 832 In Sandfly there is a ready market for love powders and
789 charms.•• This field has been highly commercialized and
[443] representatives of different corporations frequently visit Sandfly selling such articles as *Adam and Eve Root*, *Lucky Mojo Love Drops*, *Black Cat Ashes*, and *Courting Powder*.[8] Apparently the women resort to the use of the love charms more frequently than the men, and their reason for doing so was described by one woman as being "so dat dey kin rule duh men." †

754 Old and young entertain a firm belief in the existence of witches and spirits. The witches may come in a variety of shapes, appearing as a person either male or female, an animal, or sometimes as an insect.[68] When questioned regarding the apparitions, one person said, "A witch ride muh sistuh mos every night.[69] He come singin a lill song. I

• *Lizzie Jenkins, Sandfly.*
•• *Ibid.*
† *Lee Baynes, Sandfly.*

2: Jones-Jackson L-5 (1973-1986) 1987
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South Carolina

159 had the dark full lips which some people call "blue lips" because of
142 their defined darkness and smoothness. They are the kind of lips that never need lipstick, but I have seen her take one of her children's graphite pencils, scratch it against a surface to make the point soft and blunt, and rub it across her lips to accentuate their darkness. In spite of having had five children, she still had an excellent figure, and a figure is important to Sea Island men. Her rounded posterior filled out her jeans and made all of her clothes hang just right. She told me once that
159 she was not sure it was an advantage to a woman to be built the way
836 she was, because if she had not had, in her own words, "such a big ass," maybe the men would have left her alone, and she would not
142 have got pregnant when she was fourteen. She reflected on that state-
135 ment for awhile, took a long draw from her cigarette, and then
• 832 amended it by saying, "Hell, who knows what I would have done?" She had always liked men as much as they seemed to like her, she finished by saying, and she probably would have got pregnant anyway.

159 I concluded that her attractiveness emanated not only from her looks but from her style and manner as well. She had a natural, inborn sophistication and presence that any *Vogue* model would envy. I showed her a copy of *Vogue* once, along with *Essence*, *Cosmopolitan*, and *Ebony*, and asked if she would like a complimentary subscription to one for Christmas. She flipped through *Vogue* and commented that she had no place to go to wear the kind of "shit" the models displayed; she browsed through *Essence* and said it had too much fancy cooking, and the only food that tasted good to her was cowpeas and bone; she read through *Cosmopolitan* and said it seemed to be about white women wanting sex, and hell, she got enough of that without reading about it. She finally settled on *Ebony* because she liked the pictures of Billy Dee Williams.

In spite of her language and outward hardness, there was something about Ida Mae that made her very feminine. Perhaps it was the way she held her cigarette, the way she walked, or the way she smiled
159 just enough to show a glint of her gold tooth. Perhaps it was the
832 coyness with which she captivated a man's attention, any man's, that made the more respectable women of the community dislike her and the more respectable men, especially the older ones, want to get close enough to her to smell her perfume, maybe inadvertently brush against her, or at least get into a position to see her back action as she walked away. I even overheard a deacon in the church comment to her one

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afternoon, while buying a soda at Mr. Ted's store, that she had on a mighty fine-looking dress and it was sho' hitting her in all the right places. She turned, gazed into his eyes just a split second longer than what was respectable, flipped a few ashes from her cigarette on his shiny black shoes, smiled ever so slightly, and walked away. He watched her as she moved out of his eyesight. Then he hitched up his pants, put both hands in his front pockets, and asked the Lord to give him strength.

Late one Saturday afternoon I walked up the lane past the Angel Oak behind Miss Myma's house to visit Ida Mae. She lived in a two-room shanty with three of her five children. The two older girls had lived with her mother since they were born. There were no children yelling and screaming outside, however, so I thought Ida Mae was not home. I started to leave when she popped her head out of her bedroom and said, "Hi, Pat." I was lonely, so I was glad to find her in. I asked her why it was so quiet, and where the children were. She said she sent them down to her mother's house to spend the night. When I asked her why, she replied, "Ain't you business, but I de spect company soon, and when he de come, you go have fe leave." I said that was okay. We sat on the broken steps in front of her shanty and chatted about general things, children, school, work, people on the islands.

She asked about my husband and if he didn't get jealous with me running around down there. I said I didn't think so, that I had really never given him a reason to be jealous. She replied that men never needed a reason to be jealous, that they were jealous by nature and it was to a woman's advantage to keep them that way. She asked what I was doing on the islands every year, and what Africa had been like, and if the men loved big-butt women there as much as men did here. I told her that I was trying to reconstruct Africanisms, and yes, the African men loved big-butt women as much as Sea Island men did. In fact, I told her that my female friends in Nigeria had teased me because my rear end was not as round as theirs, and I had retaliated by saying that was true for me, but the Sea Island women still had behinds that would put theirs to shame. She laughed and said she was glad I told the bitches that.

She offered me a cigarette. I thanked her but refused, saying I didn't smoke. Then she offered me a shot of whiskey; again, I thanked her but refused, saying I didn't drink. Then she offered me a joint; I thanked her and said I didn't smoke pot either, and wondered where